

EXHIBIT 23

From: Dorsett, Savannah - HPL
Sent: Monday, March 20, 2017 2:47 PM CDT
To: ashley.schmidt@fortworthtexas.gov
CC: Dobos, Bradford - HPL; Bustamante, Patricia - HPL
Subject: Homeless Resources/Trainings
Attachments: Homeless Help ID Handout v4.docx, Homeless Help Food Handout.docx

Dear Ms. Schmidt,

I am following up with you regarding our discussion of resources and trainings to best serve the homeless patrons at the Fort Worth Public Library. I think last week I also spoke to one of your colleagues Laura DelaPaz and I attempted to email her but it did not go through. Profuse apologies for that and please feel free to forward this to her as well. As my coworker Brad Dobos told you, two years ago we first started creating handouts and staff trainings to address the homeless population we see at the Houston Public Library. They include an overview of the process to obtain a photo ID as this can often be extremely convoluted and requires trips to multiple social service agencies. Without a photo ID, a person cannot get a library card, cannot apply for benefits and employment and often cannot get into a homeless shelter. The other handout we created was a breakdown of places in the area that serve meals—no questions asked, no ID required and they do not need to be referred by a social service agency. All told these took about six months to eight months to create since we had to verify information. We also have done periodic staff trainings on social services in the area.

While the specific agencies we list might not apply to you since you are in the Fort Worth area, I am including examples so that you can get a rough idea of what something similar would look like.

ALA has an online toolkit with useful information, statistics and some tips on how to begin a homeless engagement project at your library.

<http://www.ala.org/offices/extending-our-reach-reducing-homelessness-through-library-engagement>

PLA also has a really wonderful webinar on libraries and the homeless with a ton of demographic data. It is very statistic heavy but it really does a lot to get into who the homeless really are and move beyond the stereotypes. Further, the discussion of 'a trauma informed approach to care' did a lot to change how I interacted with our homeless patrons. For many, the circumstances of what led them to homelessness (loss of job, military service, fleeing domestic violence) and *the very act of being homeless in and of itself* are extremely traumatic and has a huge impact on how they perceive the world—including how they perceive library staff.

<http://www.ala.org/pla/onlinelearning/webinars/archive/homelessness>

The Houston Public Library system also made mandatory for all staff the Librarian's Guide to Homelessness. This is a fantastic and extremely informative webinar. The man leading it has been working in homeless shelters his entire career and it provides practical and relevant information to best serve our patrons who are experiencing homelessness. This one might require registration and paying for it, but I view it as well worth it!

<http://www.homelesslibrary.com/>

He does have some useful free resources on his website:

<http://www.homelesslibrary.com/free-resources.html>

I think these two webinars do a lot to change the dialogue and perception of our homeless patrons and that is the first step. Mostly it really just comes down to researching the social service agencies in your area and beginning to develop those community partnerships. It can be a daunting task at times since social service agencies might be scattered throughout the city, their contact information is difficult to locate/out of date or they do not reply but keep at it. The informational needs of the homeless are often misunderstood but, I think it is well worth the effort in terms of better understanding and creating a staff better equipped to handle difficult situations.

The Coalition for the Homeless-Houston has a lot of useful resources and a quick reference guide to Houston area social service agencies.

<http://www.homelesshouston.org/>

In terms of comparable organizations in Fort Worth, this seems a useful starting point:

<http://www.ahomewithhope.org/>

I do know that the Dallas Public Library has done a lot regarding homeless engagement and even received a large grant from the Institute of Library and Museum Services. It might be worth picking their brain as well, if you have not already done so.

<https://dallaslibrary2.org/homeless/>

And in terms of service models and engagement, the gold standard might be the San Francisco Public Library which was the first public library to hire a full time social worker.

<http://www.citylab.com/navigator/2016/03/humanizing-homelessness-at-the-san-francisco-public-library/475740/>

Another great resource is t3 by the Center for Social Innovation. While, it is not specifically targeted towards libraries or librarians, much of the material is relevant when it comes to working with individuals who are homeless and some of the background information is useful especially the Behind the Numbers webinar and the one on homelessness and trauma.

<http://us.thinkt3.com/>

Good luck to you in your endeavors!

Savannah Dorsett
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Central Library
500 McKinney St.
Houston, TX 77002

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Breakfast	Lord of the Streets (LOTS), eat @ 8:00 am Loaves and Fishes, eat @ 7:30 AM – 8:00 AM		Crossroads at Park Place, eat @ 7:30 AM – 9:30 AM		Crossroads at Park Place, eat @ 7:30 AM – 9:30 AM		Loaves and Fishes, eat @ 7:30 AM – 8:00 AM
Lunch	The Beacon, eat @ 11:00 PM – 1:00 PM Loaves and Fishes, line up @ 10:30, eat @ 11:00 AM – 12:30 PM	The Beacon, eat @ 11:00 PM – 1:00 PM SEARCH Homeless, eat @ 11:30	Crossroads at Park Place, eat @ 11:15 AM – 1:30 PM Loaves and Fishes, line up @ 10:30, eat @ 11:00 AM – 12:30 AM SEARCH Homeless, eat @ 11:30	Loaves and Fishes, line up @ 10:30, eat @ 11:00 AM – 12:30 AM SEARCH Homeless, eat @ 11:30	The Beacon, eat @ 11:00 PM – 1:00 PM Crossroads at Park Place, eat @ 11:15 AM – 1:30 PM Loaves and Fishes, line up @ 10:30, Eat @ 11:00 AM – 12:30 PM SEARCH Homeless, eat @ 11:30	The Beacon, eat @ 11:00 PM – 1:00 PM Loaves and Fishes, line up @ 10:30, eat @ 11:00 AM – 12:30 PM SEARCH Homeless, eat @ 11:30	The Beacon, eat @ 11:00 PM – 1:00 PM Loaves and Fishes, line up @ 10:30, eat @ 11:00 AM – 12:30 PM
Dinner	Vegan Meals, Food Not Bombs, Library Plaza @ 7:00 PM	Vegan Meals, Food Not Bombs, Library Plaza @ 8:00 PM		Vegan Meals, Food Not Bombs, Library Plaza @ 8:00 PM		Vegan Meals, Food Not Bombs, library Plaza @ 8:00 PM	
Bagged / Take Away		Sack Lunch, Lord of the Streets (LOTS), eat @ 5:00 PM Sack Lunch, Trinity Episcopal Church @ 5:30 PM	Sack Lunch, Lord of the Streets (LOTS), eat @ 5:00 PM Sack Lunch, Trinity Episcopal Church @ 5:30 PM	Sack Lunch, Lord of the Streets (LOTS), eat @ 5:00 PM Sack Lunch, Trinity Episcopal Church @ 5:30 PM	Sack Lunch, Lord of the Streets (LOTS), eat @ 5:00 PM Sack Lunch, Trinity Episcopal Church @ 5:30 PM	Sack Lunch, Lord of the Streets (LOTS), eat @ 5:00 PM Sack Lunch, Trinity Episcopal Church @ 5:30 PM	

Contact Information:

The Beacon (John S. Dunn's Center) 1212 Prairie St. Houston TX 77002 713-220-9737	Loaves and Fishes 2009 Congress Ave Houston TX 77002 713-224-1373	SEARCH Homeless 2015 Congress Ave. Houston TX 77002 713-739-7752	Trinity Episcopal Church 1015 Holman St. Houston TX 77002 713-528-4100
Lord of the Streets 3401 Fannin St Houston TX 77004 713-526-0311	Food Not Bombs fnbhouston@riseup.net		